

## Johnsey tells about Christian's crisis

By Dennis Johnsey

Paraguay the land of lace and legend, is a partner with Mississippi Baptists along with Uruguay and Argentina. It was my privilege to share in the semi-annual mission meeting held in Coronel Oviedo, November 25-29.

My responsibilities included a Bible study in the mornings and an inspirational message in the evenings. My wife, Klydell, shared with the young people in a Bible study and counseled with many missionary wives and children.

In 1919 Argentina Baptists sent a worker to Asuncion and organized a church on October 24, 1920. Our Foreign Mission Board sent Sydney and Frances Goldfinch to serve in

Paraguay in October of 1945. Since 1945 our mission work has grown to 33 churches and 66 missions and preaching points. Last year the churches and the missions reported 251 baptisms with church membership totaling 3,063.

Paraguay, being Roman Catholic country, has in the past been unfavorable toward evangelicals, but recently, doors have been opening in many areas. I sensed a spirit of excitement and zeal among our missionaries even though work with the Paraguayans is slow and sometimes frustrating.

The village of Coronel Oviedo where our Baptist camp is located has not had any productive mission work in years. Recently, a Paraguayan Christian became caretaker of the camp. He and his family have begun Bible studies in their home. A man in the village made a profession of faith just weeks ago as a result of this work. Criticism and ambivalence from the villagers have come to this new Christian.

On Thursday a thunderstorm struck the village, and this new Christian experienced his first crisis. Lightning

(Continued on page 4)

## State missions hits \$325,960

By Marjean Patterson, director, Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union

A grand total of \$325,960.33, designated for the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering, had reached the Baptist Building by the close of November.

This total is \$5,077.91 more than the total amount of the state mission offering for September, 1980 through August, 1981. With nine months remaining in the 1981-82 fiscal year, we feel optimistic that the goal of \$360,000 will be surpassed.

We thank the Lord for the response of our people to needs here in our own state. If your offering has not been sent to the Business Office at the Baptist Building, or if your church has not yet participated in an emphasis on state missions, we'll be happy to hear from you.

## Israelis ask Baptists to build in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (BP)—Israeli officials capped a "perfect" trip to Israel for Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey Smith with a proposal that Baptists build a study center in Jerusalem.

The proposed site, one and a half acres where Mt. Scopus meets the Mount of Olives, would cost Southern Baptists \$3 million, according to

Smith. "We loved the idea and it certainly would be a great place in the land of our Lord for a Baptist presence," he said. "It's a beautiful thought, whether it can be realized or not."

Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla., was in Israel Nov. 30-Dec. 9 with 11 other Southern Baptists and nine leaders of

the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, an organization of Jewish laymen.

He said he would not lead any Southern Baptist attempt to raise the \$3 million but would support such an effort.

Smith's remarks in August 1980 that "God Almighty does not hear the prayer of a Jew," the catalyst for the ADL-sponsored trip, was not challenged by Israeli officials during the entire trip, according to Smith. One woman in a private home was the only non-media person who questioned him about it, he said.

A newspaper report from Jerusalem says reporters who asked Smith about his remark found him defending it theologically, but apologizing tactically.

One account quoted Smith as saying: "My mistake was that I did not say what I was trying to say then very well. What I was trying to say was that our relationship to God must be through Jesus Christ, and I was wrong in singling the Jewish people. I do believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father. That's my life, and that's what I preach. But I think my statement was not well said. It's a matter of keeping your distinctiveness theologically, but being able to put our arms around a brother in creation."

James T. Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas, who accompanied Smith, said he believes Smith's remark has proven "fortuitous" because it initiated lines of communication with Jews. Draper said that during the trip, Jews talked without restraint about Jesus.

Smith did not see Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who had agreed to meet him but was then hospitalized after falling and breaking his leg. Smith held discussions with President Yitzhak Navon; Religious Affairs and Interior Minister Yosef Burg; and Yitzhak Rabin, former prime minister.

Smith told Baptist Press he feels the greatest accomplishment of the trip was the "learning that took place on both sides. I sat with a rabbi from Chicago and he was amazed in learning what Baptists believe about the Bible and salvation and the total person of Jesus Christ," Smith said.

The trip reaffirmed Smith's commitment to Israel as a nation. "Everywhere we went, people talked about the survival of the State of Israel," Smith said. "And when you talk about the state and its survival, you're talking about everyone in it, including the Arabs."

"We realize half the people of Israel are non-Jewish. I want to underscore our support for all the people. While we were there, we discerned a warmth and respect for the rights of others to live and worship as they please."

Smith met with 22 Southern Baptist representatives in Israel at Baptist Village near Tel Aviv, all of them concerned that Southern Baptist leaders realize Baptists in Israel work with both Arabs and Jews and be cautious about siding with either group.

(Continued on page 4)

## Court strikes down policy banning worship on university campus

WASHINGTON (BP)—Students at state universities and colleges have a constitutional right based on freedom of speech and association to worship on campus, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled.

The court, 8-1, struck down a policy at the University of Missouri-Kansas City banning student worship and religious teaching in campus buildings or on campus property.

Speaking for the eight-member majority, Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr.

declared that the ban violated the students' First Amendment Rights of free speech and association.

Noting that the university recognizes more than 100 student groups, religious as well as non-religious, Powell wrote that the "primary effect" of permitting religious groups to worship on campus would not be the advancement of religion.

He also declared that "an open forum in a public university does not confer any imprimatur of State approval on religious sects or practices."

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## Baptisms down for 1981

# Evangelism directors plan for nationwide revival

By Patti Stephenson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Plans for a series of simultaneous nationwide revivals in 1986 were approved by state Baptist evangelism leaders during a four-day meeting, shortly after hearing that estimated baptisms for this year are down almost 7 percent. "There are still more than 1,000 persons a day being baptized into SBC

churches," said C. B. Hogue, HMB evangelism director. "Let's get on with the task to which God has called us."

Hogue said the baptism statistics are evidence that "Satan has assaulted the pastor with discouragement, family problems and in-fighting among churches."

State evangelism leaders must move out to help pastors, he said, "because our churches will do no more than their pastors lead them to do."

In preparation for a future emphasis of Bold Mission Thrust on the theme "Bold New Frontiers," the directors approved plans for nationwide simultaneous revivals for spring, 1986. A national steering committee appointed by Hogue will coordinate the effort.

It was reported 1981 baptisms are predicted to decline 29,652, or 6.9 percent from the 1980 totals.

The predictions, prepared by the research services department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School

Board, are based on reports from 23,899 churches, and projected to include the 36,000-plus congregations of the denomination.

The report indicates baptisms probably will total 400,090 in 1981.

Southern Baptist Home Mission Board research Leonard Hinton, prepared a convention-by-convention report, which includes figures from all conventions but Texas and North Carolina, and from two of the three fellowships, excluding only Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptist Fellowship.

Of the remainder, 16 conventions and one fellowship indicated gains and 16 conventions and one fellowship indicated declines.

Kentucky, California and the Northwest led the states showing increases, while Georgia, Oklahoma and Alabama experienced the greatest declines.

The report shows baptisms down across the south, traditionally the

stronghold of the 13.7-million member denomination. The declines occur at a time when the south is experiencing substantial population growth.

In the south, only Kentucky and South Carolina reported increases over 1980 baptism figures, while Georgia led southern states in decline, dropping four percent, although the state is now ranked fifth in the nation in population gains.

States showing gains, in descending order, were: Kentucky, California, Northwest, Pennsylvania-South Jersey, District of Columbia, Arizona, Illinois, West Virginia, Nevada, South Carolina, Michigan, Utah-Idaho, New York, Maryland, Alaska and New Mexico.

The New England Southern Baptist Fellowship also reported gains in baptisms.

Conventions showing declines, from highest to lowest, were Georgia, Oklahoma, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri. (Continued on page 4)

## Baptists keep Watering Hole as ministry

By Tim Nicholas

Springdale Baptist Church in Ripley has turned a "source of irritation" into a direct Christian witness.

First Monday was the irritation. First Monday is billed as one of the oldest flea markets in the country. It has been a source of irritation for years with farmers trading mules, dogs, guns, and knives. It moved to the Ripley fairgrounds and about three years ago across Highway 5 to where it has grown into a real spectacle.

People still sell the dogs, guns and knives. But now they sell—name it and it's there. Perhaps 200 dealers spend the weekend of the first Monday of each month hawking their wares.

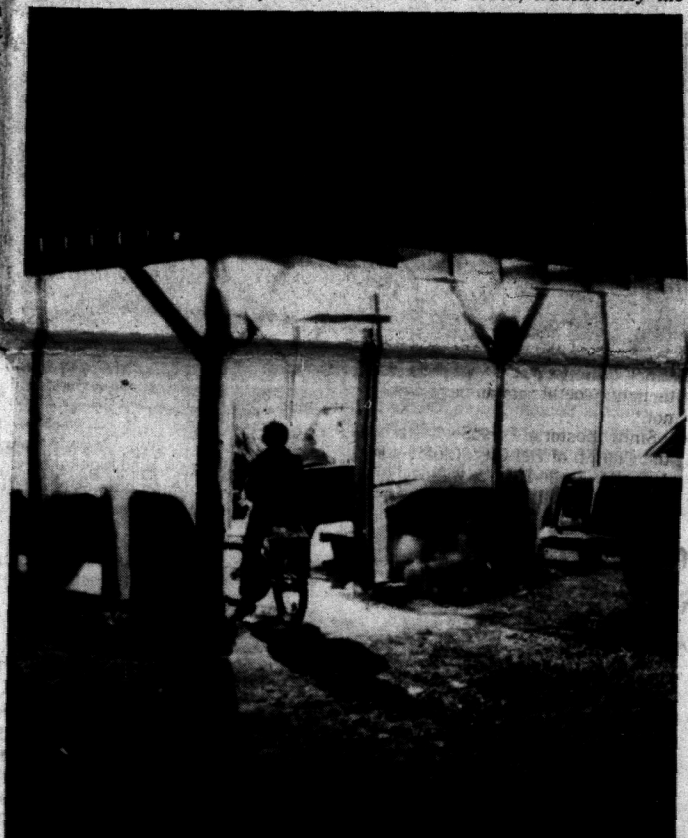
Saturday, Sunday, and Monday thousands of people stroll the paths between the dealers looking for the best deal in books, "cubes", and clothes.

The irritation is still there to Springdale Pastor Jimmy Walker, primarily because of the buying and selling on Sunday. But, as Walker tells it, "God has opened a door of opportunity for our church to witness to people of Christ's love."

Walker had endured the monthly event for three years as pastor of the Ripley church when he decided to get involved. He approached Wayne Windham who operates the flea market about bringing a bit of church to First Monday.

Windham welcomed the church group warmly, offered space free of charge to the church provided they stay all three days. Walker said okay except for Sunday mornings and the deal was on.

The 8' x 16' lean-to became the Watering Hole—the only place where (Continued on page 2)



Young cyclist looks in on children's program at the "Watering Hole" a ministry of Springdale Baptist Church, Ripley during First Monday, a gigantic flea market. (Tim Nicholas photo.)

## Like son, like father in church pastor switch

By Virgi Stewart

Clarion Ledger Focus Northeast A Broadmoor Baptist Church minister has exchanged job titles with his son and added a new twist to the traditional role of son following in his father's footsteps.

William Ferrell has replaced his son, Curtis Ferrell, as mission pastor at the church. His son left in August to become a foreign Southern Baptist missionary in Ecuador. Ferrell retired as a Southern Baptist foreign missionary in 1974.

He has his son's office, his son's house and now must prove to the members that he can do the job as well as his son, who was at Broadmoor five years.

He preaches sermons in Spanish each Sunday for Spanish speaking residents and directs the International Missions Program for residents from other countries who do not speak English.

Both the Spanish and International programs have many activities and classes other than Sunday School classes and worship services that Ferrell directs.

Ferrell speaks Spanish fluently because, for 22 years, Spanish was his first language in Argentina.

Ferrell said a few members have called him Curtis, but they usually realize their mistake immediately.

"The Spanish called Curtis 'Pastor,'" Ferrell said. "When I got here they said, what are we going to call you? Now, they call me Brother Ferrell. I've got to work my way into being their pastor, which is how it should be."

Ferrell and his wife Opal retired from the foreign missions field in 1974 because of her health. They were appointed as missionaries to Argentina in 1952.

Before coming to Broadmoor, Ferrell was pastor of a small church in Smith County, the Sylvestra Baptist Church. Ferrell said his wife's health improved while they were in Smith County and they wanted to return to Argentina. He said they made an application, his wife got sick again and the application was rejected by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

After the rejection, Ferrell was offered the job at Broadmoor to work with the Spanish.

The Greenville native said he decided to become a missionary when he was 10-years-old. "I felt God's call to be a missionary and through the years it was reaffirmed," Ferrell said. "I had no other sense of calling."

The Ferrells met while students at Mississippi College at Clinton, then he served during World War II in the U.S. Navy for more than two years. He graduated from the Southern Baptist Seminary at Louisville, Ky., and served as director of Royal Ambassadors, a boy's Christian organization, in Alabama before receiving his assignment from the missions board.

Ferrell, 56, has lived most of adult life in the Spanish-speaking country. "It was painful and difficult to leave," Ferrell said.

He said it was a greater transition to move from Argentina to the United States than the other way around.

## Mississippian is bivocational consultant

ATLANTA (BP)—Dale Holloway, Sr., supervisor of elementary education for the Mississippi department of education in Jackson, Miss., and bivocational pastor of Day Star Baptist Church, Florence, Miss., has been appointed national consultant for bivocational ministries for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's rural-urban missions department.

Holloway, who succeeds the late J. T. Burdine, Sr., has held his present position 11 years and has been a principal, teacher and counselor in Kansas and Mississippi. He has also served as pastor of churches in Kansas, Missouri and Mississippi.

A native of Carriere, Miss., Holloway is a graduate of Mississippi College, Kansas State University and the University of Mississippi. He will begin work out of his home in Florence effective Feb. 1.

Holloway and his wife, Patricia Ann, have four children.



Edwards and Wilcutt, Argentina with Mississippi Baptist volunteers.

The student missionaries' expenses are paid through a student missions fund given by their fellow students.

Edwards, who will graduate from the University of Mississippi this month, will be working with Missionary Gene Dubberly in Royal Ambassador work in La Tuna, Uruguay.

Wilcutt is a junior at Delta State University and will be working with Missionary Betty Poor doing Vacation Bible School work in areas where no Baptist work has been organized.



# Paralyzed volunteer, friends, attack FMB disability program

By Dan Martin  
WASHINGTON (BP)—Friends of a paralyzed mission volunteer have launched a letter-writing campaign attacking the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board for its "inadequate" disability programs.

The group, calling itself "Friends of Sorrels," is made up of some 20 members of Capitol Hill Metropolitan Church of Washington, has sent letters, charging "inadequacies" and "shortcomings" in the disability program, and urging the FMB to take action to prevent the suffering of disabled volunteers such as Sorrels.

Sorrels, 30, who now lives in Nigeria, was paralyzed when his fourth vertebrae was crushed in a traffic accident in 1980, less than a week after he had been in Nigeria for a year as a Missionary Corps volunteer.

His wife, a member of Capitol Hill church, prior to leaving for Africa, was not covered by disability insurance, although he had signed up for a life insurance policy.

Available for volunteers to use through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Sorrels' letters—sent to state conventions, editors and executive secretaries, all members of the Foreign Mission Board, and about 150 pastors—say because the FMB does not have any disability program for its missionaries, Sorrels will be left to fend for himself.

According to Bill Vickers, one of the founders of Sorrels' former campaign, the letters are an "awareness" campaign and ask that Baptists write letters to the FMB and that they sign and send in petitions.

It is the responsibility of every Christian to take immediate action, and to it that the Foreign Mission Board be held accountable for this fight and the situation be corrected," the letter says.

A campaign was set off after the meeting of the FMB, in which the members agreed to continue paying Sorrels a stipend of \$603.50 per month—the same as he would have received from his sponsoring church as a pastor in Nigeria—through October 1982, at which time the board officials say Sorrels will become eligible for a disability benefit.

Officials have declined to accept the FMB's responsibility because Sorrels went to Nigeria as an MSC volunteer, and not as an employed missionary.

Mission Service Corps was established by messengers to the 1977 Southern Baptist Convention, and is intended to augment the career missionary force by putting volunteers on foreign mission fields.

The point is that the volunteers will provide all necessary resources, including travel, expenses and insurance, and that the sending agencies provide only food, service, supervision and limited support.

From the very beginning, the support for these volunteers has been separate and apart from the resources of the Foreign Mission Board," said R. Parks, president of the FMB. At the 1977 convention voted a new policy of voluntarism, in which it was understood that the mission fields would provide no additional support.

Sorrels and other volunteers are asked to sign a waiver absolving the FMB of responsibility in case of "loss of property, damage to same, personal injury or injury that may come." FMB officials say they have earned \$28,412.84, to help Sorrels, and Sorrels' wife says is "\$28,000 more than we were responsible for and were required to pay." This amount included sending an additional physician and two nurses to the Ekuera hospital to provide around-the-clock care for Sorrels, board leaders said.

Parks says the money was provided in an effort to help Sorrels. He called the decision to continue the stipend until October of 1982, "a compassionate act... to provide a bridge until he has some other options."

He added that some board members questioned "whether our aid implied legal responsibility," but said he "felt we had to do it to tide him over."

"We felt we did more than we had to and about as much as we could," Parks said.

Sorrels says he does not know if the FMB has "legal responsibility but I do feel they have a Christian responsibility to help one of their own."

He added that if "you are working for a business, making a business-related trip—which I was (in Nigeria)—and are injured through no fault of your own, you would think they would have some responsibility."

Sorrels says he feels "abandoned" and "betrayed" by the Foreign Mission Board and its leaders, whom he describes as "very cold businessmen who lack Christian compassion."

He added he was "shocked" by the board action. "I had gotten indications that they were going to do as little as possible for me, but I expected more than that. After October they were going to wash their hands of me."

Sorrels and his friends hope their letters will pressure the Foreign Mission Board to change its action when it meets in December and make provision for him.

However, Parks and other board officials say they have gone above and beyond their responsibilities. They suggest that individuals, if they are truly interested, establish a special fund for Sorrels.

(Martin is BP news editor.)

U.S. Embassy agreed to provide the first round of vaccine and try to secure another round, she said, but the Foreign Mission Board is sending 20 doses to complete the series.

Hugh Provost, missionary pharmacist appointed in April, will carry the vaccine when he travels to Yemen right after Christmas. Available only through public health departments, the vaccine was obtained through the Virginia Health Department, said Franklin T. Fowler, the board's medical consultant.

Besides the five children, Thomas said she and several other adults had played with the cat and must take the vaccine.

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has sent 20 doses of human diploid rabies vaccine to Baptist missionaries in Yemen where at least five missionary children were bitten by a rabid cat.

Several Yemini families have lost children and at least one adult has died at the Baptist Hospital, Jibla, said Sarah Thomas, missionary teacher who just returned to the United States on leave.

Rabies is common in Yemen because animals are seldom vaccinated, said Thomas, but the missionary children were bitten when supplies of human vaccine were also low. The rabies virus is highly contagious.

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Jimmy Walker, pastor of Springdale Baptist Church, Ripley, preaches an evangelistic sermon at the Watering Hole.

## Baptists keep Watering Hole as ministry

(Continued from page 1)  
thirsty folks could get a cup of cold water—and a gospel tract. The first volunteers served July 4, 1980.

That first weekend the group passed out more than 5,000 cups of water and tracts. That Sunday Windham asked Walker to lead an early morning worship service for the dealers and on July 6 about 20 people met under an oak tree for worship.

In the Spring of 1981 the church built a 35' x 20' pavilion and brought in pews to seat 60.

Now the year-round ministry includes the cold water, tracts which are provided by the tract ministry of Broadway Baptist Church, Memphis, brought by dealer Johnny Loftis, and the 7 a.m. in winter (6:30 a.m. in summer) worship services, and Saturday evening programs aimed at dealers' children. Adults join the kids and attendance Saturday evenings averages 60, according to Walker.

Winter winds are slowed by heavy grade plastic sheeting around the pavilion and poultry heaters bring the brisk air of December down a few important degrees.

The December First Monday featured a Christmas program by students from Blue Mountain College, Tommy Martin of Jackson and Tim Roaten of Etta led in the children's music and story time. The mime team from BMC told Bible stories in their special interpretive way.

Sunday morning brought about 35 of the dealers and families out of their cocoons—trailers mostly, behind their booths. Some drank coffee during Walker's short evangelistic sermon. A couple even took off their coats as if warming up to the message if not the poultry heaters.

Plans are being made for campouts and another field day in the spring. George Miller is Brotherhood director at Calvary and Douglas E. Benedict, Sr., is pastor.

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Walker feels the ministry is worth every penny and every minute spent there. "I've probably preached to as many lost people here in a Sunday as I do in a year at church," he ventures.

The church budgeted for 1981-82 \$700 for the ministry. It was a bit higher but the propane tanks and the heaters and water coolers were one time costs. No offering is taken but appreciative dealers give anyway.

Church members sign up as volunteers through the church missions committee. Walker usually takes Saturday afternoons or evenings. The Woman's Missionary Union has just promised volunteers each Sunday afternoon.

"Most of our people see it as a real mission," says Walker. "Some have given out a tract here that have never witnessed in their lives."

He notes that a lot of the dealers are Christians who appreciate a chance to worship. Others would come to the rough pavilion, but wouldn't grace a church building. Some won't come inside the pavilion but stand nearby, within the sound of the loudspeaker.

Carl King, a dealer from Caraway, Arkansas, a Baptist, ("Is there any other kind?" he asks.) says he appreciates the ministry. Most don't have dress clothes to wear to church and couldn't leave their booths that long anyway. "Everybody that comes, they're happy to be here," he says.

"Lot of times, I'll bring guys that don't ever go to church. They don't have to shave—they hear the Word. Maybe next week they'll go to their own church."

King nods across the pavilion to two fellow dealers. "See those two fellows? I drug them over."

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King nods across the pavilion to two fellow dealers. "See those two fellows? I drug them over."

## Shubuta celebrates 125th year

Shubuta Baptist Church, Clarke County, marked its 125th anniversary with Old-Fashioned Day, Sunday, Nov. 29. The church was organized in 1856. Avery Jones, in his seventh year as pastor there, preached on "Old-Time Religion." Mike Moss led the choir in selected old hymns. Mrs. Linda McInnis, historian, read highlights from the church history and presented each family with a copy of it. A note was burned to celebrate the debt free status of the N. C. Wells Annex. Lunch was served in the annex.

## Part II

By Jerry Vardaman, director, Cobb Institute of Archaeology, Mississippi State University, and interim pastor, Harrisburg, Tupelo

Strong evidence exists that the Roman Proconsuls of the east had more power than any local associate king, which Herod was. Evidence at hand indicates that the line of command went basically as follows in Roman provincial administration (some gaps occur, of course):

1. Emperor—at this time, Augustus (died in A.D. 14).
2. Proconsul—Quirinius was after April of 12 B.C.
3. Associate King (Rex Socius)—which Herod was since 40 B.C. (Senatus Consulto date).
4. Ethnarch—after Herod died in 4 B.C., his son Archelaus filled this role in Judea.
5. Tetrarch—Herod's sons, Antipas and Philip, filled these roles after Herod's death.

For example, shortly after the time of Jesus' death, another Herodian family member became king of the Jews and had equally as much prestige and power as King Herod did. We speak here of King Agrippa I (A.D. 37-44/45). On one occasion King Agrippa I invited, presumptuously, several other kings and monarchs to meet with him in the city of Tiberias in his own kingdom. Josephus describes what happened when the proconsul of Syria, named Gaius Vibius Marsus, found out about this action on Agrippa's part. Marsus personally appeared in Tiberias before all of those kings and ordered each of them home at once. Even though Agrippa was in his own kingdom at Tiberias, Marsus clearly had more authority and could interfere in Agrippa's internal affairs (see Josephus, Ant. XIX.8.1.340-342).

On still another occasion, Marsus intervened in Agrippa's internal affairs and forced him to quit construction on a new wall (i.e., the "third wall") which the Jewish king was erecting on the north side of Jerusalem (Ant. XIX.7.2.326 ff.). Here again one learns that the Roman proconsul of Syria

ranked higher than any local king under his sway, just as Quirinius also ranked higher than Herod I. Strauss' argument simply falls apart in the light of contrary evidence, though it is often repeated today (see, for example, E. Schurer, History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, Rev. ed., G. Vermes, et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973, pp. 399-427, esp. pp. 413-416).

Strong evidence continues to mount, therefore, concerning Quirinius' career and indicates that he enjoyed two separate appointments as proconsul of Syria. We would date the first between 12-1 B.C. and the second starting with A.D. 4, and going until at least A.D. 9, with uncertainty as to the time this latter service terminated. Schurer (rev. ed., l. p. 259) lists the next governor of Syria known after Quirinius (in "A.D. 6") as Silanus in A.D. 12. We would regard those other officers mentioned in Josephus as ruling in Syria between 12 B.C. until Jesus was born, as subordinates who served under Quirinius (here we speak of Saturninus and Varus, and possibly Titus as well; Josephus never calls any of them ANTHUPATOI but STRATEGOI).

One could reason, of course, if one cares to argue in that fashion, that Luke means that Quirinius' first term covered only the time between 12-10 B.C. and even Brown leaves that time open and uncertain as to the ruler of Syria in that period (Brown, Birth of Messiah, p. 550). If this is the period intended by Luke, then his chronological point of reference is even more restricted, and exact.

As far as we are concerned, the famous inscription found at Tivoli, near Rome, and then published by Enrico Sannicciola (De vulgaris aerae emendatione libri quator. Rome: J. Zempel, 1793) does refer to Quirinius, just as that brilliant student, who was the first person to do so, recognized. Many suggestions have been made that this text refers to someone else (M. V. Agrippa, Saturninus, Titus, Varus, Piso, etc.) but no other person fits the needs, historically speaking, other than Quirinius. Moreover, my micrographical examination of that document also shows that it definitely

relates to Quirinius. We give here the same translation of that text found in our Archaeology and the Living Word.

p. 96 (Nashville: Broadman, 1965):  
(TP. Sulpicius Quirinius?) consul... as proconsul obtained Crete and Cyrene as a province... as legate of the divine Augustus, obtaining Syria and Phoenicia he waged war with the tribe of Homonadeis who had killed Amyntas the king; when he returned into the dominion of the Emperor Caesar Augustus and the Roman people, the senate (decreed) thanksgivings (to the immortal gods) on account of the two successful (ful accomplishments) and triumphal ornaments to him; as proconsul he obtained Asia as a province; as the legate of the divine Augustus he (obtained) again Syria and Phoenicia.

This inscription sufficiently indicates that Quirinius did serve at least twice as the ruler of Syria and Phoenicia. Luke implies as much as referring to Quirinius' first term of service as governor of Syria (2:2) in his mention of the first census enrollment.

The Time Of Christ's Ministry:

"Now, in the 15th year of Tiberius... the word of God... came unto John in the desert..." (Luke 3:1)

The present writer considers that this verse ca. the time of John's ministry has suffered slight alteration in the transmission of the New Testament. As far as this writer is concerned, the true reading of this passage should mean that John the Baptist came preaching during the time of the 5th year of Tiberius. From ancient Greek sources it is possible that one can find the explanation for this complicated problem by the following simple solution. We give here how the original Greek could have looked for the reading of "5th year" and for the "15th year," since there was more than one way of writing the word for "year" in ancient Greek:

Ε Τ Ε = "15th year"  
Ε Τ Ε = "5th year"

If it is confusing to the modern student to see how little difference there is between these two figures, it was equally as hard for the ancient scribe to catch the difference, and it does seem to this writer that a slight mistake was made in the transmission of the text at this point.

As one will note, it is possible that

Luke, in writing his original Gospel, completely connected the two strokes of the "Τ", if so, his text is to be read as "5th"; if Luke left those two strokes with a slight space between them, it means "15th," and it is easy to see how some early scribe could have made a simple error afterward in the transmission of Luke's Gospel. The manuscript evidence for the "5th year," it must be confessed, is absent in the present state of affairs.

There is evidence, however, from Josephus, and Luke himself, that "5th year" is the true way to understand Luke's Gospel at this point. If one will read Josephus carefully, that person will discover that Josephus dates Jesus' ministry around the year A.D. 18 (see Josephus, Antiquities XVIII.3.3.63 ff.). He places Jesus' work solidly within a context of history at that time, as one can see, by dating certain events on each side of Jesus' ministry which Josephus mentions:

- 1) Orodes rules in Armenia (Ant. XVIII.2.4.52) = A.D. 15-18
- 2) Germanicus sent to the east (Ant. XVIII.2.5.54) = A.D. 17
- 3) Time of Jesus' ministry (Ant. 3.3.63 ff.) = ca. A.D. 18 (?)
- 4) Tiberius overthrows Isis worship (Ant. XVIII.3.4.65 ff.) = A.D. 19
- 5) Tiberius expels Jews from Rome (Ant. 3.5.81 ff.) = A.D. 19, etc., etc.

If Jesus was born in 12 B.C., and if he was "beginning to be about 30," as Luke tells us (Luke 3:23), then Josephus turns out to be an important source for dating the time of Jesus' ministry by assigning a time for that ca. A.D. 18. On the other hand, since Herod died in 4 B.C., it is equally as hard to reconcile Luke's information with Josephus, if Luke's reading of the "15th" year of Tiberius (= A.D. 28/29) is correct, since Jesus would have been well over 33 years of age, as a minimum, by that time, assuming that he was born as late as 5 B.C. Thus, one should note that the "5th" year of Tiberius fell in A.D. 18/19, which agrees with Josephus perfectly; to our way of thinking, the "5th year of Tiberius" therefore is the true reading in Luke 3:1.



# Mission Gifts Of Mississippi Baptist Churches Thru Convention Board

Jan. 1, 1981-Nov. 30, 1981

[illegible]

(Continued on page 4)



## Jan. 1, 1981-Nov. 30, 1981

## Annuity trustees grant 13th check

First Southern Baptist Church of De City, Okla., where Bailey E. Smith, president of the SBC, is pastor, reported a sharp decline. In 1980, the church reported 2,028 baptisms, the first time in SBC history a congregation baptized more than 2,000 persons

Williams also cited the rapid growth of ethnic and black congregations in California.

*(Patti Stephenson writes for the HMB.)*

The new facility, which includes a gymnasium, racketball court, game room and a 60 by 100 foot indoor swimming pool, is needed to care for a growing enrollment expected at the

**Big 3 Lumber Co., and Valley Gin Co.**  
The 69-year-old hospital complex, largest non-profit health care institution in the United States, with 2,067 beds and more than 60,000 annual admissions in Memphis and hospital affiliates in Corning, Ark., Ripley, Tenn., and Covington, Tenn., is owned by Southern Bell.

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*(Patti Stephenson writes for the HMB.)*

ported a sharp decline. In 1990, the church reported 2,028 baptisms, the first time in SBC history a congregation baptized more than 2,000 persons in a single year.

Construction should begin about May, 1982, with completion expected 18 months later. Maurice Elliott, hospital senior vice president and project manager, said.

Architect is Walk Jones and Francis

In other action, the trustees elected William A. Crabill of Marks, Miss., as chairman for a one-year term. Crabill is vice president of Marks Seed Co., Big 3 Lumber Co., and Valley Gin Co.

The 69-year-old hospital complex, largest non-profit health care institution in the United States, with 2,067

side of Union between Pauline and Camilla, adjacent to the present nursing school and one block east of BMH Medical Center.

Construction should begin about May, 1982, with completion expected 18 months later, Maurice Elliott, hospital senior vice president and project

In other action, the trustees elected William A. Crabill of Marks, Miss., as chairman for a one-year term. Crabill is vice president of Marks Seed Co., Big 3 Lumber Co., and Valley Ginn Co.

The 69-year-old hospital governor

The 69-year-old hospital complex, largest non-profit health care institution in the United States, with 2,067 beds and more than 60,000 annual admissions in Memphis and hospital affiliates in Corning, Ark., Ripley, Tenn., and Covington, Tenn., is owned by Southern Baptists in Mississippi, Ark.



# Just for the Record



SHADY GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH, HAZLEHURST's Girls in Action were recently recognized for completing Missions Adventures projects. First row—Susie Burns, Dee Pansano, Whitney Marx, Christie Sparkman; Second row—Jennifer Holliday, Sandra Channell, and Leigh Nelson.



"That We Might Share With Others" was the theme of a recognition service for GAs and Asteens at First Baptist Church, Magnolia, Nov. 11. Loran Walters, Queen, was escorted by her father, Thomas Walters. Amanda Lee, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Perry Lee, was crown bearer. GA awards went to Gretchen Avey, Ginifer Bryant, Sheila Bule, Amy Cutrer, Sylvia Carona, Elise Harrell, Christy Lenoir, Macy Smith, Brandi Bryant, Laney Lanier, Traci Simmons, Allison Smith, Angela Temple, Crystal Temple, Bridgette Bryant, Tawesia Honea, Lisa Lang, Missy Lenoir, and Mandy Smith. A recognition award was given Rochelle Frazier. GA leaders are Mrs. Mary Nell Walters, Mrs. Zella Nelson, and Mrs. Janet Cutrer. Mrs. Gaye Smith is the Asteens leader.



Wildwood Baptist Church, Clinton, burned its sanctuary note on Nov. 15, 1981, the date on which the church celebrated its seventh anniversary. The worship facility was completed in May, 1978. Pictured are members of the Building Committee; left to right: Jane Rochester, Glynda Woodruff, Sue King, Joyce Brown, Richard Williams, co-chairman, Fred Womack, pastor, James Jenkins and Bill Taylor. Not pictured are Bert Marshall, chairman, and John Simpson.

Montgomery Baptist Association observed "M" Night at North Winona with 204 present. Jim Allen's Scotland Church had 76 members present and walked off with both banners; the largest in attendance and the percentage of efficiency banner. Other awards made were: First Baptist for state recognition in the "Top 25" award and Stewart Baptist for "Church Training Growth Award." Gene Henderson, pastor of Fairview, Columbus, brought the highlight message.

Mrs. Ramona Moulder led the youth. The film "Devil at the Wheel" was shown. Mrs. Julie Halfacre led the Preschoolers with Sara Holmes leading the children. North Winona's puppet team under the leadership of Tina and Maurice Gaskin performed the skit, "Gordon DiscipleLife—This is Your Life."



George Steward, left, Montgomery Association Church Training director, presents banners to Gary Milner, Church Training director, Scotland Church.



George Steward presents plaque to Mrs. Dorothy Watkins, Church Training director, Stewart Church.

Mrs. Nell Kincaid, missions volunteer to Litchfield Park, Ariz., has returned home to Moorhead and is available for missions emphasis talks. She may be contacted through her pastor Bobby Connerley, of Moorhead Baptist Church, Moorhead, phone 246-5424.

William Carey College's Renaissance Singers presented a program of Christmas music on three occasions in Hattiesburg, as part of the School of Music's "Music to the People" program.

The concerts were given for residents of the Happy Acres and Green Forest Convalescent Homes on Dec. 2, at the Cloverleaf Mall on Dec. 3, and in the lobby of First Mississippi National Bank on Dec. 8.



Wade Baptist Church, Jackson County, presented a plaque to L. L. Magers, left, in appreciation of his 30 years of church service in the Gulf Coast area. On Nov. 12, 1981, a month after the above picture was made, Magers died. H. A. Wilks, right, pastor, made the presentation.

From 1950 to 1953 Magers was deacon, Sunday School director and teacher at Wade Church. After moving to another part of the county, he returned to Wade Church in 1973 and became Sunday School director again, an office he held until October, 1981.

Magers twice served as moderator of Jackson County Baptist Association. He earned many study course diplomas and was given an award from the state Sunday School department for 25 years of meritorious service through the Sunday School.



SADDLESORE SAM WORD and the Brotherhood Boys prepared beans and stew for "Round-Up Day" Nov. 22 at First Baptist, Southaven. They rounded up members, friends, and guests into the sanctuary for services, fellowship, food, and fun. Many Sunday School attendance records were broken and 400 people attended the services which went well into the afternoon. Country and western theme was the setting for the day. (Photo by James Woods.)



MACK HALFORD, left, and ROBERT HUFFMAN, center, members of Fellowship Baptist Church, Choctaw County, have received certificates of appreciation from the Foreign Mission Board for their help in a joint mission project sponsored by the Webster and Choctaw associations in Haiti. Roy R. Marshall, right, Fellowship pastor, made the presentation. The associations bought materials, and sent 12 men from each county to erect two metal buildings for an SBC missionary to use there.

Calvary Church, Holly Springs, honored its pastor, William Irwin, and his wife and daughters, Kathy and Erika, with a first anniversary day at the church Nov. 15. Larry Stevens, nephew of Mrs. Irwin, and a newly ordained minister, delivered the morning message. Lunch was served at the church. During the past year, attendance in Sunday School and Church Training has increased, and Children's Church has been started.



TRINA DAVIS, right, has earned a 12-year perfect attendance pin in Sunday School at Antioch Church, Alcorn County. Don Rinehart, left, Sunday School director, presented the pin.

Second Baptist Church, Kosciusko, will display a live nativity scene Dec. 18, 19, 21, and 22, from 6 to 8 p.m. on its premises at 203 Lee St., Kosciusko. The church's float won first place in the church division of the Kosciusko Christmas Parade.

Second Church's Sunday School set a goal of "over 100 each Sunday" during the "Five Fabulous Sundays" of November. Average attendance, including an extension class at the nursing home, increased from 119 in November, 1980, to 141 in November, 1981. Sunday school director is Errol Carron; pastor is Carlis Braswell.

The Adult Choir of Palestine Baptist Church, Harrisville, Miss., will present the Christmas cantata "Love Transcending," Dec. 20, at 6:15 p.m. in the church sanctuary. Youth choir members will portray characters of the Christmas story. Music director is Sammy McDonald.

Kenneth Moore, pastor of Sallis Church, will leave on Dec. 28 for India, where he will preach in an evangelistic crusade.

## 2,500 professions of faith estimated in Pakistan

Anis A. Shorosh, Southern Baptist evangelist and Arab native of Nazareth, was principal speaker for meetings in Pakistan where he estimated professions of faith at 2,500.

Shorosh spoke in Lahore, Peshawar, Faisalabad, Gujrat, and Rawalpindi. In addition, he visited Afghan refugees on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Shorosh was accompanied by Slim Corrette, a Southern Baptist music evangelist from Ripley, Miss.

Because he is an Arab and familiar with Muslim customs, Shorosh is welcomed in many Islamic countries. As a boy, he attended Sunday School with his family at the Nazareth Baptist Church.

In 1948 his father, a Baptist lay preacher, was killed accidentally in

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## Devotional

### Challenge to God's people

By Charles Holifield, pastor, Liberty Psalms 1:1-3  
Psalms 1:1-3 has a very special meaning to my Christian life. The late Jimmy Parish, then pastor of First Baptist Church, Laurel, Miss., used this scripture in the dedication sermon at Myrick Baptist Church, Jones Association; in 1948. It was on the invitation that I surrendered my life to preach the gospel.

The psalmist believes that fellowship with God is found only when one has majored on learning God's Word, communing with God, and eliminating from his thinking and behavior those things which are displeasing to God. The psalmist describes the ideal man and puts down for us something of his character, his influence, his conduct, and his destiny. Strangely enough, Jesus maybe not in the words of the psalmist but in meaning, emphasized some of the same things in his Sermon on the Mount.

In this psalm we are treated to the portraits of two men. One of them guards his direction, his leisure, his company, loves and meditates on the Word of God in word, thought, and deed. The other man goes in the opposite direction.

The psalmist tells us that a life that feeds on God's Word, and delights to do God's will will find that it is ever fruitful in good works.

Teaching is a matter of life. Materials are important but there has to be the dedicated life to present the materials. True teaching coming from a committed servant of the Lord produces changes in those who are taught. A warm and compassionate heart brings about dividends.

There are some essential marks or characteristics of a productive godly leader. There are, to be sure, lessons to be taught, tasks to be performed, and duties to be fulfilled but the essential of it all in purpose is a life to be influenced and directed toward the one example, Christ Jesus our Lord. We are always to be the learner looking for ways and methods to improve our teaching, witnessing, and leadership.

The psalmist taught us:

1. Walk not in counsel of ungodly.
2. Stand not in way of sinners.
3. Sit not in seat of scornful.
4. Delight in the Word of God.

Fruitfulness is the promise of the psalmist. Bring forth fruit in our season is the promise.

## Staff Changes

Barney Bagley has resigned as pastor of Bexley Church (George-Greene). Mike McDowell, a New Orleans Seminary student, has been called as interim pastor.

Lewis Sewell has resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church, Oxford.

Eastwood Church, Indianola, has called Onan Riley Gardner, of South Louisville.

Danny Powell has accepted the pastorate of New Hope Baptist Church, Jones Association. He moved from First Baptist Church of Moss, Jasper Association. Powell is a student at New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Fran, have one son, Danny Reese, Jr., 2.

Guy Hughes has accepted the position as interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Louise. From Clinton he is a student at Mississippi College. He and his wife Lisa have a son, Joshua.

Bob Rogers has accepted the pastorate of Union Baptist Church, Roxie, in Franklin County and his wife Mary has accepted the role as song director for the Union Church. They moved from Woodville, where he was song director and youth director at Woodville Baptist Church and pastor of the Fort Adams Baptist Mission, sponsored by the Woodville Church. Rogers is a student at New Orleans Seminary.

Grace Memorial Church, Tupelo, has called Talmadge Smith as minister of music and Randy Warman as youth director.

Russell Scruggs, former pastor of Wyatt Church, has accepted the call to become pastor of Mount Manna Church, Northwest Baptist Association.

David E. Satterwhite has accepted the pastorate of Glade Baptist Church, Laurel. He came from Hueytown Baptist Church, Hueytown, Ala. A graduate of Southwestern Seminary, he is a native of Amory, Miss., and has served churches in Texas and Alabama. He is married to the former Mavis A. Wade of Tupelo. They have one daughter, Sophia Dawn, who was graduated from high school this year.

Lewis Oswalt has accepted the call as minister of music at First Baptist Church, Pascagoula. Oswalt received a bachelor of music degree from Mississippi College and a master of music degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. He, his wife, Lisa, and his son, Lane, will be going to Pascagoula from First Baptist Church, Water Valley.

Clyde Pullen has resigned the pastorate of Glendale Church, Greenville, in Washington Association.

Jerry Henderson has resigned the pastorate of Petal-Harvey Church, Petal.

Jim Phillips, senior at Mississippi College who has been serving as interim pastor at Spring Hill Baptist Church, Copiah County, has been called as full time pastor.

He will preach at First Baptist, Union, Miss. June 27 - July 1, 1982.

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## 16 from state to be graduated from Southwestern

Sixteen from Mississippi will be among the record 289 graduates receiving degrees Dec. 18 from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex. Included in the group will be the seminary's 20,000th graduate.

William M. Pinson, Jr., president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, San Francisco, will be the featured speaker.

Mississippians to get degrees are David Watson Allen, MDiv, Louisville; Willie Mack Amis, MDiv, Pascagoula; Paul Balducci, MDiv, Cleveland; Rose Alldridge Bear, MRE, Grenada; Anne Miller Davis, MRE, Jackson; Rusty Allen Eason, MCM, Southaven; James Keith George, MCM, Moss Point; David Raymond Hadley, MDiv, (in-laws live in Jackson); Katri Hudspeth, MRE, Tupelo; John Thomas Littlejohn, MDiv, Pontotoc; Cynthia Ann Mahaffey, MRE, Jackson; Ronald Allen McCully, MRE, Sallito; Karen Ruth Marcus Pendley, MDiv, (in-laws live in Caledonia); Robert Jewell Sanderson, Jr., MCM, Waynesboro; R. C. Smith, Jr., MRE, formerly of Biloxi and Meridian; Tommy Neal Snyder, MDiv, Blue Springs.

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## Bible Book Series

### The birth of the King

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Luke 1:26-2:20

The virgin birth is a distinctive Christian doctrine. After the baptism of Jesus the Lord God identified Jesus as His "only begotten" or one of a kind. Yes, Jesus is unique! Jesus was born of the virgin Mary just as an angel had promised, and the angels proclaimed his birth to the shepherds.

#### I. The announcement to Mary (1:26-38.)

During the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy with a child who was to be John the Baptist, the angel Gabriel visited Mary in Nazareth. Gabriel announced to Mary that she was "favored" with the Lord. Apparently she was the one selected by the Lord God to bear unto the world his Son, the Savior.

This presented a problem for Mary in that she was not married and had experienced no sexual relations with any man. Gabriel reassured Mary that all things are possible with God. After all, Elizabeth, who was considered barren and too old to bear children, was about to give birth to a child. God can do anything.

Mary was betrothed to Joseph. Betrothal lasted for a year, and it was as binding as marriage. It could only be dissolved by divorce. Should the man to whom a girl was betrothed die, in the eyes of the law she was a widow. Without doubt Mary was frightened. She was a virgin. What would Joseph think and do? How would the community react? Mary put these fears and others aside and quietly submitted herself unto the Lord.

Verse 38 expresses complete obedience on the part of Mary. She identified herself as "the handmaid of the Lord." "Handmaid" means self-given slave-girl who could do only the will of the master. This term is the same as Paul's bondservant.

Gabriel told Mary she would conceive by the Holy Spirit and bear a male child. As with John earlier the angel named the child — Jesus. Jesus means "The Lord is salvation."

#### II. The song of Elizabeth to Mary (1:39-45)

Mary lost no time in paying a visit to her kinswoman. Obviously Mary had not heard of Elizabeth's pregnancy before the visit of the angel Gabriel. Gabriel visited Mary in Elizabeth's sixth month (v. 36) and she returned home after a visit of about three months (v. 56), apparently before the birth of John. Therefore, she must

have set out almost immediately after the angel's visit. "The hill country" of Judah does not locate the home of Elizabeth and Zechariah with any precision, but it does make it clear that they were country folk.

In verse 43 Elizabeth used the title "mother of my Lord." This indicates that Elizabeth recognized that Mary's child would be the Messiah (cf. Ps. 110:1). She went on to explain that at Mary's greeting her own baby "leaped with joy" (the word denotes exultation) in her womb. It was this that enabled her to recognize Mary for whom she was. She concludes with a further blessing of Mary.

We need to observe the absence of all jealousy in Elizabeth's attitude to Mary. The older woman, who had been the recipient of such a signal blessing from the Lord, might well have tried to guard her position jealously. But in genuine humility she recognized the superior blessing God had given to Mary. A further point of interest is the fact that John the Baptist did not recognize fully Jesus as Messiah until the baptism (Jn. 1:32f.) Apparently Elizabeth's recognition that he is Lord was an inspired but personal matter. John, just like every individual, had to find it out for himself.

#### III. The song of Mary (1:46-56)

The song of Mary is called the Magnificat from its opening words in the Latin translation. It is an outburst of praise largely in Old Testament language. There are several resemblances to the song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1-10.) The difference is in tone. Hannah's song is a shout of triumph in the face of her enemies. Mary's song is a humble contemplation of the mercies of God.

#### IV. The birth of John the Baptist (1:57-80.)

As the angel had prophesied, Elizabeth's child was a boy. The birth was clearly of widespread interest among the mother's family and friends, and many of them came to share her joy.

It was provided in the law that a male child should be circumcised on the eighth day. In the Old Testament the name was apparently given at birth and it does not seem in any way connected with circumcision. We are not to think the naming of the child took place necessarily on the occasion of the circumcision. The father and others wanted to name the child after the father. Elizabeth rejected the idea

and insisted on the name the angel gave to her — John. Zechariah accepted the name of John as an accomplished fact. The result was an immediate end to Zechariah's dumbness.

#### V. The birth of Jesus (2:1-7.)

Even though Joseph and Mary were from Nazareth, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. A census was taken and the head of the family had to register at the place of his family. Since Joseph was of the family of David, he had to report to Bethlehem, called the city of David, though David is not recorded as having had contact with it after he left it. Similarly, Jesus is never said to have visited it after his birth there. Mary's attendance was probably not necessary, but she went. Therefore, Jesus was born in Bethlehem and scripture was fulfilled (Mi. 5:2.).

The birth of Jesus' Son is described very simply. "Swaddling clothes" are long stripes which could wrap the child round and round. That Mary wrapped the child herself points to the lonely birth. That he was laid in a manger has traditionally been taken to mean that Jesus was born in a stable. We only know that everything points to obscurity, poverty, and even rejection.

#### VI. The announcement of angels (2:8-20.)

Likely the shepherds were pasturing flocks destined for temple sacrifice. The angel (messenger) is not identified, but this appearance struck terror into the shepherds. The announcement of Jesus' birth went to common people. The message of the announcement was good news. Christ the Lord is born!

When the angels left, the shepherds visited baby Jesus immediately. Luke rounds off the wonderful story with the return of the shepherds. They were full of praise to God for the news they had heard and the sight that had confirmed it.

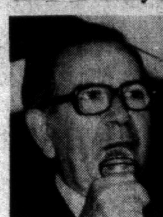
WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (BP)—Claude H. Rhea Jr., dean of the Samford University School of Music in Birmingham, Ala., has been named president of the Palm Beach Atlantic College. Rhea, who will assume the presidency of the 14-year-old college Feb. 1, 1982, succeeds George R. Borders, who resigned to become executive secretary of the Florida Baptist Foundation in Jacksonville.

To succeed, you must be easy to start and hard to stop.

## 'Building of Love' dedicated

By Maxie Kirke  
Missionary, South Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL—The Bible School of the Air on Aug. 29 dedicated its newly-acquired building in



downtown Rio de Janeiro, to the service of God. Named the "Building of Love, it is next door to the building under construction — "The Building of Faith," in which the Bible School of the Air and the Hope Baptist Church own seven floors.

The Bible School of the Air, founded in 1949 by David Gomes, is today a conglomerate of various evangelistic ministries under direction of its founder. Bible classes are broadcast over a network of radio stations that reach Portuguese-speaking people in all parts of the world. The entity publishes evangelical literature and tracts, maintains Bible correspondence courses, has a retreat facility, and sponsors evangelistic crusades.

The Hope Baptist Church (Igreja Batista da Esperanca) was organized in downtown Rio de Janeiro in 1966, an outgrowth of the noonday evangelistic services and prayer meetings held daily by the Bible School of the Air staff, in their downtown offices. Today this church has over 300 members in the local church fellowship and over 200 others spread out in mission congregations in Rio and in other states of Brazil.

The Hope Baptist Church is an evangelistic seed-bed as it reaches people who chance to be in Rio de Janeiro and are reached by the gospel through the ministries of this church. Upon their return to their homes, many have begun Baptist work where there was none.

The Bible School of the Air, in an effort that extended over a long period of time, and in the face of incredible difficulties, purchased a valuable corner lot on the First of March Street in the financial and business center of Rio. One of the major construction firms in the city agreed to build the 22-floor Building of Faith, deeding seven of the floors to the Bible School of the Air, two of which the Hope Baptist Church then purchased, in exchange for the property owned by the Bible School. This building is now nearing completion, but Gomes already perceives that these seven floors will not be adequate for the combined ministries of the Bible School of the Air and the growing Hope Baptist Church.

In January of this year, a 12-floor building next to the "Building of Faith" was put up for sale by the Federal Savings and Loan Bank, at approximately one million dollars. With no money in hand but feeling once again that God was challenging the faith of all those who have a part in the ministries of the Hope Baptist Church and the Bible School of the Air, Gomes presented a written request for the purchase of the property, in the name of the Bible School. After some time had passed, he was called to a conference with the president of the Bank, to explain his bid for the purchase of the property. Investigations made by the bank had revealed that the Bible School did not begin to have adequate assets in hand to effect such a purchase.

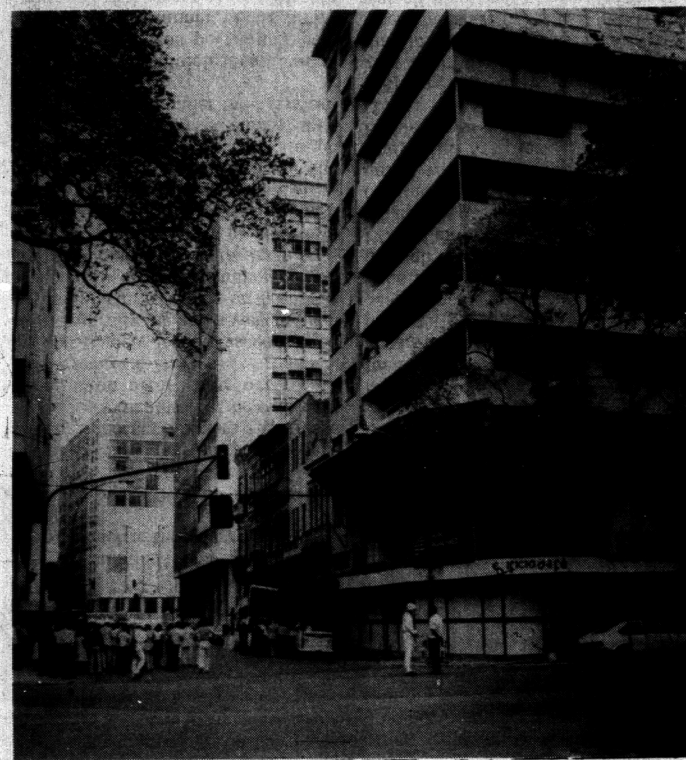
David Gomes took advantage of the invitation to relate the story of how God had made it possible for the Bible School of the Air to buy the property where the Building of Faith is now being constructed. The bank president was so impressed that he signed the right to purchase, provided the

downpayment of 17 million cruzeiros (about US \$170,000.00) be paid by the end of the month.

The call to prayer went out. God raised up a buyer for one of the floors in the "Building of Faith" that belonged to the Bible School of the Air. The downpayment was made in full!

Each month the mortgage payment grows larger, accompanying Brazil's spiraling inflation rate and high interest rate on loans. In cash, the price today would be in the neighborhood of US \$500,000.00.

The ground floor is already leased to a Christian Book Store. There are plans for a Christian Center for Seamen, since the building is a few blocks from the port area of Rio. The Hope Baptist Church has leased two floors for expansion of its Sunday School and week-day activities. There will be opportunity for Leadership Training and Pastoral Care Clinics. The staff of the Bible School of the Air will now have the necessary space to attend efficiently their more than 70,000 students in all parts of the world.



View of "Building of Faith" under construction, at right, with the "Building of Love" (12 stories next to the 22-floor building) next door. In front, the platform, sound equipment and group that gathered for the praise service in which the building was dedicated to God. (Photo by Sr. Linhares, photographer for O JORNAL BATISTA).

## Life and Work Lesson

### Freed to be God's children

By Joel E. Haire, pastor  
First, Crystal Springs  
Galatians 3:23 to 4:7

Christmas is a time of year that traditionally brings families together. They eat together and fellowship together. It is a time when children come home to see parents and a time when grandchildren look forward to seeing their grandparents. Expressions of love and joy abound.

Many people who seem to be burdened at other times of the year find a way to offer the world a smile at Christmas. There is a warmth and happiness about Christmas. It is a time of giving and a good time to say thank you for what we have received.

Christmas is a time when those of us who belong to God's family can rejoice in the fact that we are freed to be God's children. This was made possible because "... when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:5-6).

The birth of Christ gave us great cause for celebration. It was an important part of God's plan that would lead to our adoption as his sons and daughters. As Christians we have been adopted into God's family. We are his children.

Our adoption began with a journey that took us from law to grace and from bondage to freedom.

#### I. God's children completing a journey (3:23-27.)

Christmas is a time when thoughts naturally turn toward home. The journey home is usually anticipated with enthusiasm. Home represents a place of freedom, happiness and contentment. For those who hold home so dear it may be a kind of ultimate destination for Christmas holidays.

In our spiritual journey we are incomplete under the law. It is not our ultimate destination. The law's place is one of restraint rather than freedom. Paul described it as a place where we were kept in word. The law was a jailer and men under it were kept prisoners. This was not to say the law was bad. Rather it was preparation for the faith which was to be revealed. On the other hand there were the restraints and limits of the law, but on the other would be the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

The law was not to be looked on as

an enemy, but as a friend. Although it was not the gospel, it was a good preparation for the gospel. Paul used the example of a custodian to further explain the place of the law. In Paul's day the custodian was a trusted servant who led a child placed under his care to school, and had responsibilities in the supervision of that child's morals and manners. However, this was a temporary arrangement. Once maturity was reached it was no longer needed.

The law had been a guide. It had to do with outward actions and right conduct, but was not a permanent and final answer to man's spiritual needs. Spiritual freedom to be found in Christ was the final answer.

Fulfillment of a complete and lasting journey can be found in Christ. It is a journey of faith. When we become children of God by faith in Jesus Christ we have reached our destination. Because there is no better place to be we don't have to travel anymore or search anymore.

Baptism is a symbol of what takes place in the believer's heart. A Christian identifies with Christ and therefore follows him in baptism. The outward picture of baptism reminds us that the believer is now and forever a new creature in Christ.

#### II. God's children being together (3:28-29)

There is a togetherness for God's children in Christ that they could not have in any other way. This is not to say that Christians lose all personal distinctions and characteristics. All Christians are not exactly alike. Salvation does not mean sameness. It does mean that Christ moves into individual lives, working in and through those different personalities. The result is a common bond which is Christ Jesus. The dominating influence upon every Christian life is Christ. The most important and obvious thing is not Jew, Greek, bond, free, male or female. Rather it is Christ. "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Colossians 3:11).

Paul made it clear that there is only one way to be the true seed of Abraham. This does not come through a physical blood line. It comes through a personal relationship with Christ. Because we belong to him we are heirs according to promise.

#### III. God's children appreciating relationships (4:1-7.)

My childhood experiences of Christmas celebrations were pleasant. However, most of these were built around receiving. In my childlike way I sought happiness in the things I received for Christmas. My childhood concept of Christmas was normal for a child. However, it is inadequate for an adult. With growth comes maturity that is more interested in giving than receiving. There is gratitude for what I learned as a child about giving and receiving, but no desire to go back to childish Christmas ideas.

The difference in childhood and adulthood is also obvious in relation to salvation. Tutors and governors were needed until the time appointed of the father. However, there came a time when maturity called for a new relationship. God made possible this new relationship because in the fullness of time he sent forth his Son. Bondage under the law was no longer necessary or appropriate. Redemption was offered to those under the law. The adoption of sons became man's greatest opportunity.

Spiritual maturity was secured by faith in Christ. His coming brought release from spiritual infancy and servitude. This made possible our adoption. We are no more servants, but sons.

Because of our adoption we can approach the Father in confidence and love. The Spirit himself cries within our hearts, "abba, Father." This is a loving and trustful entreaty. It reminds us of our intimate relationship with God as his children.

We can rejoice this Christmas because God gave us his Son. As we not only possess God's greatest gift, but also allow that gift to possess us, we experience the true joy of Christmas.

## Revival Dates

Heidelberg Church, Heidelberg: Dec. 28-Jan. 3; at 7 p.m.; seven-member Lisemby-Family Evangelistic Team of Lake Charles, La., to present gospel and sacred music followed by a message each evening; J. W. Tynes, pastor. The Lisemby's use a variety of instruments, including brass, string, and percussion. Day outreaches will include school, jail and home visits, street witnessing, and ministering to the deaf.

## Uniform Lesson

### Good news of great joy

By Jerry E. Oswalt, pastor  
Second Avenue, Laurel  
Luke 2:1-20

The joyful songs of Christmas are already ringing everywhere. The greatest and grandest of those songs are related to the birth of the Savior, who is Christ the Lord (2:11b).

Almost everything known about this most joyous event in human history is couched in the lovely story of Luke 2:1-20. Matthew shared important information concerning the announcement to Joseph about the birth and the visit of the Magi after the birth but nothing about the birth itself. Mark and John gave no birth narratives at all.

Contained in Luke's brief account is the inspiration for some of our most treasured Christmas carols.

#### I. "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (2:1-5)

Bethlehem was a prominent town because of its association in the past with Israel's great king, David, and because it had been predicted by the prophet Micah to be the birthplace of Israel's Messiah (Micah 5:2).

The immediate reason for Joseph and Mary traveling to Bethlehem from Nazareth so near to the time for the birth of her first child was to participate in an enrollment for taxation purposes, which had been decreed by Caesar Augustus. Augustus, who ruled the Roman Empire from 30 B.C. to A.D. 14, declared that "all the inhabited earth" was to be enrolled (2:1). This probably applied only to Rome and her subjects. Palestine had been subject to Rome since Pompeius invaded Jerusalem in 63 B.C.

Luke probably called this the first enrollment to distinguish it from another enrollment ordered by Quirinius in A.D. 6, which Luke mentions in Acts 5:37 (Luke 2:2).

Joseph had roots in Bethlehem and may have lived there prior to his residence in Nazareth. Mary for unknown reasons accompanied him on the three-day journey even though she was expecting her first born son. Their marriage had not been physically consummated at this time, but they were otherwise living together as husband and wife (Mt. 1:21-25).

There is some indication in both Matthew and Luke that Joseph and Mary intended to make their move to Bethlehem permanent. For example, when the Magi came to see the one born to be King of the Jews they found the family in a house (2:11). There is

some speculation that Jesus may have been as much as two years of age at the time.

#### II. "Joy to the World! The Lord is Come" (2:6-7.)

The fact that Mary and Joseph were still in temporary quarters when Jesus was born indicates that he was delivered soon after their arrival in Bethlehem (2:6-7).

Even though Jesus was conceived supernaturally, he had a very natural physical birth. After his birth he was wrapped in ordinary clothing for an infant. But his crib was far from ordinary. It was a manger or a feeding trough for animals. This was necessitated by there not being room available in the inn in Bethlehem and the subsequent taking of shelter by Joseph and Mary in an enclosed animal shelter located either under the inn or adjacent to it (2:7).

The Savior's complete identification with mankind was poignantly portrayed in the manner of his birth. Truly, he did not grasp at equality with God, but emptied himself (Phil. 2:6-7).

#### III. "Angels We Have Heard On High" (2:8-14)

Even as his humanity was being forever enthroned in a manger in Bethlehem, his divinity was being gloriously proclaimed to some shepherds just outside the city (2:8).

An angel appeared suddenly to the shepherds as they were tending their flock that night. Accompanying the angel was the brilliance of God's glory. The word "glory" is used many ways in the Bible. Here it obviously refers to some kind of supernatural light. The darkness of the night made the appearance of the special messenger from God even more brilliant. The shepherds stood in reverential awe at the sight (2:9).

The angel immediately sought to allay their fears, assuring them that there was no need for fear but rather of joy because of the good news that a Savior, Christ the Lord, had been born that very day in Bethlehem (2:10-11).

The angel's announcement has two clear indications of the universal nature of Christ's coming: (1) his coming was to be a cause of great joy for all people (2:10); (2) he was called not only Christ (Messiah of the Jews) but also Lord, which means ruler and has a more universal connotation (2:11).

The shepherds were told that they could easily identify the Christ child because of his unique crib (2:12).

The angel was then joined by a

heavenly host or army, which praised God (2:13). Their praise was poetry but not necessarily song. It was directed to God. Glory to God for providing peace on the earth and good will toward men through his Son, Jesus Christ (2:14).

The word translated "with whom he is pleased" in the RSV is never used in the New Testament to refer to man's good will or pleasure; it always refers to God's good will or pleasure. Both peace among men and God's good will upon men are God's gracious gifts through his Son, Jesus Christ.

#### IV. "O Come All Ye Faithful" (2:15-20)

The shepherds were completely convinced that what they had seen and heard was a revelation from God. They did not hesitate to go to Bethlehem in search of the Christ child (2:15).

Apparently, there was no special glow about the crib, nor was there at that time a star over the place as later when the Magi came (Mt. 2:9-11). It was all most ordinary except for one significant difference—the crib was a manger. That one simple sign was all the shepherds had to confirm that this was the Savior (2:16).

The shepherds then told everyone around about the announcement from the angels. No one there could relate to what they were saying, because the child in the manger certainly didn't have any likeness to the Christ they expected to come (2:17-18).

No one, that is, except Mary. She pondered in her heart that which the shepherds had said, probably correlating it with the announcement made to her by an angel less than a year previously (Luke 1:28-35).

The shepherds returned to their flocks glorifying and praising God for all that they had experienced (2:20). They were among the very first to discover the great joy of the Good News. "Good Christian Men, Rejoice."

WACO, Texas (BP)—John Seales, vice president for development of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, has been named director of development at Baylor University. Seales, who began his new duties Nov. 30, had been on the staff of the Fort Worth-based RTVC since 1980. He replaces former Baylor development director Gerald Williamson, who died in July.

The only time to give advice is when it is asked for.